

CITY OF WEIRTON

200 MUNICIPAL PLAZA
WEIRTON, WEST VIRGINIA 26062

June 6, 2016

Stenhen Mader, Patrolman

Weirton, WV 26062

RE: Conduct unbecoming an Officer

Dear Patrolman Mader:

This letter is to advise you of the disciplinary action to be taken by the Chief of Police as a result of your failure to meet probationary standards of a police officer.

As you know, you are a probationary employee for the City of Weirton Police Department in which probationary period, as I understand, expires on July 24, 2016.

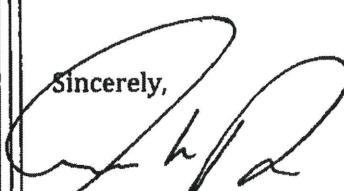
Anytime a law enforcement officer has apparent difficulties in critical incident reasoning, which renders him/her ineffective, is detrimental to the public confidence in their law enforcement agency.


Therefore, due to your failure to meet probationary standards of an officer, which a full copy is attached to this document, the following disciplinary and punitive action will be:

As of Tuesday June 7, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. your employment with the City of Weirton Police Department is terminated.

I must also advise you that you may contest this disciplinary action by the Chief of Police by giving written notice within ten (10) days requesting a hearing before a Hearing Board or the Police Civil Service Commission in compliance with WV Statue §8-14-20.

Sincerely,


Travis L. Blosser
City Manager


Chief A. R. Alexander III
Police Chief

Enclosure: Probationary Standards of an Officer

Cc: Mayor
City Attorney
Benefits Administrator



Weirton Police Department

Chief of Police

200 Municipal Plaza
Weirton, West Virginia 26062



Phone (304) 797-8577

06/01/2016

Fax (304) 797-5709

To: Travis Blosser, City Manager
From: Rob Alexander, Police Chief
Reference: Stephen Mader, Probationary Patrolman

Dear City Manager,

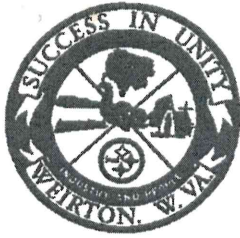
This letter is a recommendation letter for disciplinary action against one (1) officer under my command, Probationary Patrolman Stephen Mader. Attached you will see a letter from [REDACTED] explaining his findings and recommendations after conducting an investigation surrounding Prob. Ptlm. Mader's actions or lack of actions during an early morning shooting on 05/06/2016.

I concur with the Captains findings and recommendations of this particular incident, and as well for several other conduct unbecoming offenses that are in the 201 personnel file of Prob. Ptlm. Mader. These consist of, but are not limited to, the 03/07/2016 incident on Orchard St involving the arrest of Mr. [REDACTED], the 04/12/2016 incident involving the suspicious death of Mrs. [REDACTED], and now the actions surrounding the early morning officer involved shooting.

Prob. Ptlm. Stephen Mader should be terminated as it relates to his conduct unbecoming an officer and since he is still in his probationary status and under Chapter 8, Article 14, Section 11 of the WV State Code should not make probation here at the city of Weirton Police Department.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Chief A. R. Alexander III



**CITY OF WEIRTON
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE**

**EMERGENCY 911
DISPATCH**

**FAX
304-797-5709**

Address All Correspondence to:
A. R. ALEXANDER, III
Chief of Police
304-797-8577

200 Municipal Plaza
Weirton, West Virginia 26062



May 31, 2016

Chief A. R. Alexander, III
City of Weirton Police Department
200 Municipal Plaza
Weirton, WV 26062

RE: Probationary Patrolman Stephen Mader

Dear Sir:

Chapter 8, Section 14, Article 11, of the West Virginia State Code states the following: "All original appointments to any position in a paid police department subject to civil service provisions of this article shall be for a probationary period of one year. Provided that at any time during the probationary period the probationary may be discharged for just cause, in the manner provided in Section 20 of this article. If, at the close of this probationary term, the conduct or capacity of the probationer has not been satisfactory to the appointing officer, they shall be notified in writing, that he will not receive absolute appointment, whereupon his employment shall cease."

"Just Cause" is defined as – misconduct of an employee, or some other event^{***} relevant to the employee, which justifies the immediate termination of the employment contract.

It is the duty of a police officer to provide enforcement of criminal and traffic laws with emphasis on providing basic enforcement and citizen protection from criminal depredation throughout the community and maintaining safety upon the community's streets and highways.

It is the opinion of this officer that Ptlm. Mader should be dismissed from employment by the City of Weirton Police Department before the close of his probationary period due to negligence on his part during the incident that occurred on May 6, 2016, in which a fellow officer had to react and unfortunately take the life of the suspect, Ronald. D. Williams, Jr., to ensure the safety of the victim and her young son at Marie Avenue, Weirton, West Virginia, Hancock County, as well as other officers on scene and other citizens residing within the immediate area.

"WE SERVE THE PUBLIC"

Chief A. R. Alexander, III

May 31, 2016

Page 2

Ptln. Mader was negligent in the fact that he failed to engage the suspect to end the threat of any further violence or potential loss of life as the suspect presented a clear and present danger to all people in the immediate area. On Page 5 of Ptln. Mader's statement given to Lt [redacted] of the Weirton Police Department, he states, "I could tell [redacted] was in danger of being shot." but failed to react. Furthermore, on Page 4 he states, "He (the suspect) was now raising his gun higher. The gun was at about my thigh or torso area. His aim was damn close but I think slightly to the left of me. If he would have fired, it would have been a torso shot to me. He was waving his gun back and forth between me and [redacted]"

The unfortunate reality of police work is that making any decision is better than making no decision at all.

Law enforcement is a difficult career full of ever changing and fast moving scenarios in which decision making is a critical component and this incident is not the first incident during the probationary period that Ptln. Mader had exhibited poor judgment or failed to deduce facts and circumstances surrounding him. More specifically a previous incident in which he failed to view a situation as suspicious which lead to an improper decision on the cause of death for an individual and only after the facts were discovered by other police officers and investigators dispatched, and an autopsy performed of the decedent that the cause of death was determined to be blunt force trauma with a severed spine. Ptln. Mader was written up for this incident.

It is this officer's experience as a 24 year veteran of law enforcement and holding many positions within the police department, that no officer was ever trained to deduce the intention of a suspect or the possible area of impact that may be the result of the suspect's discharge of a firearm during a deadly force. It is the responsibility of the officer to be aware of his target backstop and beyond during a deadly force encounter but this was not the situation facing Ptln. Mader. Ptln. Mader was within several feet of the suspect with artificial lighting and was the officer in the best possible position to engage the suspect with little or no collateral damage.

Ptln. Mader's failure to react left himself and those around him in grave danger, facing the threat imminent bodily injury and or loss of life.

Chief A. R. Alexander, III

May 31, 2016

Page 3

It is my recommendation that Ptlm. Mader be terminated while still on probation because of the severity of the aforementioned situations and his apparent difficulties in critical incident reasoning rendering him ineffective and presenting himself as more of a liability to the Weirton Police Department and the City of Weirton, than an asset.

Respectfully, _____

Captain
Weirton Police Department
200 Municipal Plaza
Weirton, WV 26062